

**§ 769.11 Who may submit a petition.**

Any person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected by surface coal mining operations to be conducted on Federal lands may petition the Secretary to have an area designated as unsuitable for all or certain types of surface coal mining operations, or to have an existing designation terminated. This right does not apply to areas set aside from surface coal mining operations under laws other than the Act. For the purpose of this section, a person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected must demonstrate how he or she meets an "injury in fact" test by describing the injury to his or her specific affected interests and demonstrate how he or she is among the injured.

**§ 769.12 Where to submit petitions.**

Each petition to have an area of Federal lands designated as unsuitable or to terminate an existing designation shall be submitted to the Director of the OSM Field Office responsible for that area where the Federal lands are located.

**§ 769.13 Contents of petitions.**

(a) *Designation.* The only information that a petitioner need provide to designate lands is that required under § 764.13(b) of this chapter.

(b) *Termination.* The only information that a petitioner need provide to terminate a designation is that required by § 764.13(c) of this chapter.

**§ 769.14 Initial processing, record-keeping, and notification requirements.**

(a)(1) Within 30 days of receipt of a petition, OSMRE shall determine whether the petition is complete and not frivolous. OSMRE may request other supplementary information that is readily available to be provided by the petitioner. Any request for such supplementary information from the petitioner shall not affect OSMRE's determination that the petition is complete for further processing.

(2) *Complete.* (i) for a designation petition, means that (A) all information required under § 764.13(b) of this chapter has been provided and (B) the informa-

tion submitted by the petitioner contains significant new allegations of fact and supporting evidence not considered in any previous unsuccessful petition of Federal lands review conducted under Section 522(b) of the Act, that tends to establish that the lands are unsuitable for surface coal mining operations; and (ii) for a termination petition, means that all information required under § 764.13(c) has been provided.

(3) *Frivolous.* for a designation or termination petition, means that:

(i) The allegations of harm lack serious merit; or

(ii) Available information shows that no "mineable" coals resources exist in the petitioned area or that the petitioned area is not or could not be subject to related surface coal mining operations and surface impacts incident to an underground coal mine or an adjoining surface mine (mineable coal is coal with development potential as mapped or reported by the Bureau of Land Management under 43 CFR 3420.1-4(e)(1); and privately owned coal under land owned by the United States).

(b) When the Director finds that the petition is incomplete or frivolous, he or she shall reject the petition with a written statement of reasons and advise the petitioner, via certified mail, that the petition may be reconsidered upon resubmittal with deficiencies cured.

(c) When the Director finds that the petition is complete and not frivolous, he or she shall initiate the petition review and so advise the petitioner via certified mail.

(d)(1) Within 2 weeks after accepting the petition for further processing, OSM shall send a copy of the petition to the authorized officer of the land management agency for the officer's recommendation on the petition.

(2) The authorized officer of the appropriate Federal land management agency shall furnish a recommendation on the petition to OSM within 30 days of its receipt, if the area covered by the petition has been included in a completed Federal lands review or within 9 months, if the area has not been included in a Federal lands review.

(e) Promptly after accepting a petition for further processing, OSM shall